

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BANGKO 20215 01 OF 02 310742Z

12

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 AID-05 /082 W

----- 023324

R 310531Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9450

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

AMCONSUL UDORN

CINCPAC HONOLULU

DIA WASHDC

USSAG NAKHON PHANOM TH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BANGKOK 20215

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TH

SUBJ: CAMPAIGN '75 - IV

REF: BANGKOK 19994

INTRODUCTION:

THE THAI NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTION ARE SCHEDULED FOR
26 JANUARY 1975. THIS IS THE FOURTH OF SEVEN WEEKLY
ELECTION CAMPAIGN SITUATION REPORTS.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BANGKO 20215 01 OF 02 310742Z

SUMMARY:

THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION CAMPAIGN CONTINUES TO GATHER MOMENTUM. CANDIDATES IN THE NORTH HAVE MENTIONED TO US THAT THE RTG VOTER EDUCATION PROGRAM AND THE IMPROVED ROAD SYSTEM OVER SIX YEARS AGO MAKES CAMPAIGNING EASIER. WHILE OTHER CANDIDATES ARE DEVELOPING THEIR ELECTIONEERING TECHNIQUES, MINORITY CANDIDATES ARE SHOWING PARTICULAR STRENGTH IN THIS YEAR'S ELECTIONS. SPOT CONVERSATIONS SUGGEST THAT SINO-THAI AND KAREN CANDIDATES HOPE TO UPSET NORMAL VOTING PATTERNS NOW THAT THEIR BRETHREN CAN VOTE. VARIOUS MODES OF TRANSPORTING THE ELECTION RETURNS ILLUSTRATE THE MULTIFACETED TOPOGRAPHY OF THAILAND. DEPOSED LEADER THANOM KITTAKACHON MAY HAVE INTERJECTED HIMSELF INTO THE CAMPAIGN WITH HIS LIGHTNING RETURN AND DEPARTURE. END SUMMARY.

1. THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR ANNOUNCED RECENTLY THAT THE SOCIAL JUSTICE PARTY HAS THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF REGISTERED CANDIDATES WITH 237. THE DEMOCRAT PARTY IS SECOND WITH 231. THE SOCIAL ACTION PARTY (230) AND THAI NATION (210) PARTIES RANK THIRD AND FOURTH. ON THE OTHER HAND OF THE SCALE THREE PARTIES -- OCCUPATIONAL WELFARE AND CHARITY, PROVINCIAL DEVELOPMENT, AND SOCIALIST FREE DEMOCRAT -- ARE RUNNING ONLY ONE CANDIDATE EACH. ALTHOUGH 2221 CANDIDATES REGISTERED, POOR FINANCES AND MURDERS HAVE REDUCED THE TOTAL FIELD TO 2,193.

2. CHIANG MAI PREDICTS THAT THE CAMPAIGN WILL BEGIN TO PICK UP AFTER THE HOLIDAYS BECAUSE THE BANGKOK HEADQUARTERS ARE BEGINNING TO RELEASE ANOTHER ROUND OF FINANCIAL LARGESSE. SOCIAL NATIONALIST AND SOCIAL ACTION CANDIDATES IN SOME PARTS OF THE NORTH HAVE RECEIVED CARS WHICH THEY CAN KEEP IF THEY WIN. MOVIES AND MOVIE PROJECTORS ARE MORE EVIDENT.

3. THE CAMPAIGN GATHERS MOMENTUM ALTHOUGH IT STILL IS QUITE DEVOID OF THE HOOPLA NORMALLY ASSOCIATED WITH SUCH EVENTS. SOME CANDIDATES EXPLAIN THAT THEY HAVE BEEN CAMPAIGNING SINCE THE 1969 ELECTIONS AND THAT THEY ARE ALREADY WELL-KNOWN LOCAL PERSONALITIES. OBSERVERS MENTION CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BANGKO 20215 01 OF 02 310742Z

FEW LARGE RALLIES AND THAT CANDIDATES WHO INTERRUPT THEIR OWN MOVIE SHOWINGS FOR A SPEECH NEED TO TALK FAST OR LOSE THE WHOLE VILLAGE.

4. ANY ADVANTAGE IS IMPORTANT IN THIS ELECTION. SAN THEPMANI, SOCIAL AGRARIAN CANDIDATE IN LAMPHUN, TOLD CONSULATE CHIANG MAI THAT HE HAS FOR THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS MANAGED TO GET HIS NAME ON NEARLY EVERY WAT IN THE

PROVINCE BY CONSTRUCTING A GATE (AT A COST OF 1000 BAHT, I.E., U.S.\$50), THEN WHITEWASHING THE WAT AND HOLDING A DEDICATION CEREMONY AT WHICH HE UNVEILS A PLAQUE INSCRIBED "DONATED TO THE PEOPLE OF...BY SAN THEPMANI." HE THINKS IT'S THE BEST IDEA HE EVER HAD BECAUSE SOME PEOPLE THINK HE GAVE THEM THE WHOLE WAT.

5. A COUPLE OF CANDIDATES IN NORTHERN THAILAND HAVE MENTIONED TO THE CONSULATE THAT CAMPAIGNING IS EASIER THIS TIME. THEY CITE THE IMPROVED AND EXTENSIVE ROAD NETWORKS. THEY ALSO COMMENT THAT THE TRG VOTER EDUCATION PROGRAM IS A BOON BECAUSE THE CANDIDATE DOESN'T HAVE TO SPEND TIME ACQUAINTING THE PEOPLE ABOUT THE PARTICULARS OF THE ELECTIONS. NEVERTHELESS, SOME CANDIDATES GROUSE ABOUT THE RTG PROGRAM, FOR THE OBVIOUS REASON THAT THEY FEEL IT WORKS AGAINST THEM.

6. SINO-THAI PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATES' USE OF CHINESE LANGUAGE ELECTIONEERING MATERIALS DREW AN OFFICIAL RULING FROM THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR THAT THERE IS NO LEGAL PROHIBITION AGAINST FOREIGN LANGUAGE CAMPAIGNING. MANY SINO-THAI ARE CANDIDATES IN THE CURRENT ELECTIONS AND THEY HAVE BEEN MAKING DIRECT APPEALS THROUGH THE CINESE LANGUAGE PRESS. NOW THAT MORE SINO-THAI ARE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE THAN BEFORE, THEY HOPE TO CASH IN. SINO-THAI BUSINESSMAN PRAYUT BUNSIRITHAM IS A THAI NATION PARTY CANDIDATE IN BANGKOK'S SIXTH ELECTORAL DISTRICT. HE HAS GREAT HOPES OF UPSETTING DEMOCRAT PARTY LEADER M.R. SINI PRAMOT IN AN ELECTORAL DISTRICT WHICH SPANS MUCH OF CHINATOWN. FOR ALL INTENTS SINO-THAI PRASIT KANCHANAWAT'S SOCIAL NATIONALIST PARTY IS HEAVILY AND OBVIOUSLY CHINESE, AS IS THE PEOPLE'S JUSTICE PARTY IN THE NORTHEAST (UDORN A-10). WITH THE NEW CONSTITUTION AND NATIONALIST LAW, THE SINO-CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 BANGKO 20215 01 OF 02 310742Z

THAI HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE NATION'S POLITICAL LIFE; THEY APPARENTLY ARE TAKING IT.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BANGKO 20215 02 OF 02 310729Z

17

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10

AID-05 ISO-00 /082 W

----- 023269

R 310531Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9451

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

AMCONSUL UDORN QOIT

CINCPAC HONOLULU

DIA WASHDC

USSAG NAKHON PHANOM TH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BANGKOK 20215

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

7. WHILE THE ELECTORAL STATUS OF SOME HILLTRIBESMEN IS IN DOUBT, VARIOUS CANDIDATES ARE GOING AFTER THEIR VOTE IN A BIG WAY. THE CHIANG MAI CONSULATE REPORTS THAT KAREN CANDIDATES THOM NITIKON (SOCIAL NATIONALIST) AND BUNLOET SAWANKHUN (WORKER'S) ARE THE LEADING CONTENDERS FOR MAE HONG SON'S TWO SEATS. BILINGUAL POSTERS IN THAI AND A MORE PROMINENT KAREN ARE EVIDENT. KAMPHENGPHET PROVINCE HAS FEW HILLTRIBESMEN. NEVERTHELESS THAI NATION CANDIDATE PRASIT CHUPHNINIT RECENTLY HOSTED A MEO CANTON CHIEF TO DINNER AND A NIGHT ON THE TOWN, AND ESCORTED HIM THROUGH THE BANGKOK BUREAUCRATIC MAZE. THE CANTON CHIEF HAD A CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BANGKO 20215 02 OF 02 310729Z

PROBLEM WITH A GOVERNMENT ROAD BUILDING PROJECT AND PRASIT NEEDS ALL THE VOTES HE CAN GET.

8. CREATIVE MEASURES ARE ON THE BOARDS FOR REPORTING THE ELECTION RESULTS. THE GOVERNOR OF UTHAITHANI TOLD US THAT BALLOT BOXES FROM THE OUTSKIRTS OF FORESTED BAN RAI DISTRICT WILL COME IN BY ELEPHANT. HE'S HOPING TO GET AN ARMY

HELICOPTER. IN MAE HONG SON, YOUNG MEN, MOSTLY KAREN FAMILIAR WITH THE TRAILS, ARE BEING HIRED TO RUN THE ELECTION RESULTS TO THE POLICE WHO WILL BE WAITING ON THE RIVERS AND HIGHWAYS TO DEPOSIT THEM AT THE MAE SARIANG DISTRICT OFFICE.

9. DEPOSED LEADER THANOM KITTIKACHON SUDDENLY RETURNED TO THAILAND DECEMBER 27. HE AS HURRIEDLY LEFT THE COUNTRY DECEMBER 29 WITH HIS AILING FATHER, BEFORE OPPOSITION STUDENTS OR POLITICIANS COULD WORK UP EXCESSIVE FRENZY. THANOM'S APPEARANCE ON THE SCENE MAY, HOWEVER, HAVE INITIATED POLITICAL SHOCK WAVES PRESENTLY UNDETECTED. THE COLLABORATION OF SOME FORMER PARLIAMENTARIANS WITH THE THANOM GOVERNMENT IS AN ISSUE IN FEW CONTEST. SOCIAL ACTION PARTY LEADER KHUKRIT PRAMOT APPROVED THE GOVERNMENT'S TURNING THANOM OUT ON THE GROUNDS THAT HIS PRESENCE WOULD CREATE PUBLIC DISUNITY AND DISRUPT THE ELECTIONS.

10. UNITED THAI PARTY LEADER SA-ING MARANGKUN AND TWO MEMBERS OF THE PARTY'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DIED IN AN AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT DECEMBER 29. THE 58 YEAR OLD SA-ING WAS LORD MAYOR OF BURIRAM, WHERE HE WAS RUNNING FOR PARLIAMENT. HE IS NOTED FOR HIS 11 YEARS IN EXILE ON MAINLAND CHINA DURING THE SARIT HANARAT PERIOD. SA-ING HAD BEEN PUSHING FOR A LORD MAYORS' DELEGATION VISIT TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND SOME CIRCLES CONSIDERED HIM ONE OF THE CHANNELS THE THAI USED IN DEALING WITH PEKING. HIS NEWSPAPER OBITUARY MENTIONED THAT THE UNITED THAI PARTY HAD THIRTEEN CANDIDATES IN THE CURRENT ELECTION. SA-ING WAS PROBABLY THE ONLY CANDIDATE WHO STOOD MUCH OF A CHANCE.

KINTNER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SITUATION, ELECTION CAMPAIGNS, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, ELECTION CANDIDATES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BANGKO20215
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750001-0021
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974123/aaaaacas.tel
Line Count: 255
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 BANGKOK 19994
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 MAY 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <30 DEC 2002 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CAMPAIGN '75 - IV
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TH
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005